

Harvard University, Lawrence Hall
3 Kirkland Street
Cambridge
Middlesex County
Massachusetts

HABS No. MASS-1022

HABS
MASS
9-CAMB
21-

PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20240

HARVARD UNIVERSITY, LAWRENCE HALL

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Location: 3 Kirkland Street, Cambridge, Middlesex County,
Massachusetts

Final Owner Harvard University
and Occupant: Demolished 1970

Final Use: Offices

Statement of This academic building was originally built as a
Significance: laboratory and residence. Designed in a brick
Italianate style, the building had been extensively
remodeled, but retained its original exterior character.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Date of erection: 1848.
2. Architect: Richard Bond.
3. Original and subsequent owners: Lawrence Hall stood on part of sixty-two acres of land, formerly the Foxcroft farm, purchased by Harvard College in 1816 from Peter Chardon Brooks. Middlesex County Registry of Deeds, Book 213, p. 432.
4. Original plans and construction: The building was originally built as a laboratory with a dwelling connected by an ell.
5. Alterations and additions:

1871 Interior entirely remodeled; three floors made from two floors; entrance porch built.

Eustis, Henry Lawrence. "The Lawrence Scientific School." The Harvard Book, Vol. I, p. 291. Cambridge, Massachusetts: F.O. Vaille and H.A. Clark, 1875.

1892 North wing added.

Bail, Hamilton Vaughan. Views of Harvard. Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1949, p. 230.

Major remodeling was undertaken in 1871. It was probably at this time that much of the interior partitioning was altered. External changes were also made at that time. The massive, rusticated doorway to the hall from Kirkland Street was removed and replaced with a window. The entrance porch to the dwelling was bricked in and converted into a small room. A loggia was then added across the south

front of the ell. to connect the dwelling with the hall. Doors to the loggia were cut into the hall, on the west, and the dwelling, on the east. The balustrade on top of the bay window and the former entrance porch of the dwelling were probably removed at this time. The east and west cellar doors of the hall and the central doorway in the loggia were added to replace windows.

B. Historical Events and Persons Connected with the Structure:

The house connected with the laboratory was built as a residence for the Rumford Professor and Lecturer on the Application of Science to the Useful Arts. Eben Norton Horsford (who later lived at 27 Craigie Street, HABS No. MASS-1021) was the first Rumford Professor to live in the house.

C. Sources of Information:

1. Bibliography:

Bail, Hamilton Vaughan. Views of Harvard. Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1949, pp. 228-231, plate LXI.
History of building and view of Lawrence Hall from Gleason's Pictorial Drawing Room Companion, Vol. 7, No. 7, June 14, 1851, p. 112.

Cohen, I. Bernard. "Harvard and the Scientific Spirit."
Harvard Alumni Bulletin, 1948, pp. 393-398.

Eustis, Henry Lawrence. "The Lawrence Scientific School."
The Harvard Book, Vol. I, pp. 279-293. Cambridge, Massachusetts: F.O. Vaille and H.A. Clark, 1875.

Gleason's Pictorial Drawing Room Companion, Vol. 7, No. 7, June 14, 1851, p. 112.
Wood engraving of Lawrence Hall with text.

Morison, Samuel Eliot. The Development of Harvard University 1869-1929. Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1930, pp. 304, 401-402, 413-433.

Morison, Samuel Eliot. Three Centuries of Harvard 1636-1936. Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1936, pp. 279-280.

Rettig, Robert Bell. Guide to Cambridge Architecture: Ten Walking Tours. Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1969.

2. Likely sources not yet investigated: Harvard Corporation records.

Prepared by Susan Maycock
Survey Associate
Cambridge Historical Commission
June 20, 1969

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: Lawrence Hall was Harvard's only remaining Italianate building. It was constructed as an essentially plain and utilitarian laboratory building in 1848 from plans by Richard Bond.
2. Condition of fabric: Demolished, 1970. The building had been remodeled several times, but was well maintained.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Overall dimensions: Lawrence Hall consisted of two rectangular buildings connected by an ell and a loggia. The hall measured approximately 40 feet x 75 feet and the dwelling and ell were approximately 35 feet x 46 feet. The front elevation of the hall had three bays, but the bays of the other elevations were irregular. The hall was three stories on a basement and the dwelling was two stories with a basement which had full length cellar windows at the rear.
2. Foundations: The hall had a base of bluestone rubble fill, then above grade there were large gray granite slabs, 24 inches thick (at the corners), 50 inches high, and about 6 feet long. Above this was a course of similar stones approximately 14-1/2 inches high. The basement level was brick on the east and west sides. The dwelling also had granite slabs above grade, but the slabs were smaller and had a 45° bevel at the top. The granite slabs were smooth on the south and rough faced on the east. There was a brick foundation at the rear. The basement walls were of quarry blocks approximately 4 feet high. Above this was brick in common bond with a row of headers at the top. At both the east and west corners of the south end there were large blocks of the exterior foundation stones which projected in approximately 1 foot and provided a more massive base for the corners. Two similar blocks, 4 feet square, projected in at the center of the wall approximately 4 or 5 feet apart. These were the foundation stones for the rusticated doorway originally located above this point.
3. Wall construction, finish and color: The walls were of smooth pressed brick laid in common bond, set in gray mortar. The east side of the dwelling had rougher brick, but of the

same color. The first floor of the hall on the south elevation had reddish-brown sandstone quoins, approximately 12 inches high, set in red mortar, with beveled edges. There was a string course at the second and third floor levels and a molding that joined the tops of the windows, just below the lintel, on the third floor. These string courses did not continue across the rear elevation.

4. Structural system, framing: The brick load bearing walls were 15 inches thick at the basement level and the same at the third floor windows.
5. Porches, stoops, bulkheads, etc.: There was a loggia entrance along the south side of the ell, approximately 13 feet x 18 feet, with two segmental arches divided by a central column of red sandstone. Running the full width of the loggia were seven granite risers. There were cellar entrances on the east and west sides approached by steps in a concrete well. These entrances appeared to have been cut from former windows, this was most evident on the west side. The rear entrance to the hall cellar was a 6 foot wide opening, reached by four stone steps, with large gray granite slabs for the post and lintel. This seemed original. On the east side of the dwelling there was an old bulkhead with gray granite pieces which framed a rectangular opening; this had been covered.
6. Chimneys: There were two chimneys on the hall located at the middle and rear of the gable roof and one chimney at the rear of the ell.
7. Openings:
 - a. Doorways and doors: The rusticated main entrance to the hall was removed, but the foundation could be seen in the basement. The loggia entrance to the hall had a double door with three panels, approximately 6 feet wide. The center door of the loggia to the ell was a single door of three panels with a two-light transom. The loggia entrance to the dwelling was identical to the hall door.
 - b. Windows and shutters: Hall: The basement windows were six-over-six lights, in a cut granite well, with black frames and brown molding trim. The first floor also had six-over-six light windows with sandstone sills on block brackets and a pedimented lintel which was also on simple block brackets. The second floor had round-headed twelve-over-six light windows with a paneled semicircular hood mold. The sills rested on the string course. The third floor had three-over-three light windows with sills, on two block brackets, which continued with the string course, and lintels, which

rested on the ends of the molding course. In the gable, on the front and back, were two small roundels with louvers for ventilation. The rear gable had a small six-over-six light window on the third floor. The roof had skylights. Cleats and pulleys indicated that the windows had awnings at one time. Dwelling: The basement had plain six-over-six light windows with lintels and sills at ground level with no wells. The side windows of the basement had shutter pintles still in place and there were shutter latches in the brickwork at one time. Pulleys and cleats indicated awnings. The south elevation had a rectangular bay window, painted dark brown, with two arched windows on the front and one on each side. The corners and dividing strips of the bay window were treated as Doric pilasters. The projecting molded sill was supported on heavy three-ply brackets. Above this there was a six-over-six light sash window. Above this there was a four-light semicircular window. The roof projected on brackets with a molded course below the brackets. The east elevation had more elaborate window frames with carved pedimented gables on the first floor. The second floor windows had molded lintels on small brackets. In the gable on the third floor there was a lunette on small brackets. Loggia: The central door had a rectangular molded lintel above, and the two windows on either side of the door had similar lintel caps of wood, painted gray and sanded to resemble granite.

8. Roof:

- a. Shape, covering: Gable roof with rectangular slate covering.
- b. Cornice, eaves: The projecting cornice of red sandstone was supported on closely spaced plain brackets. The gutter molding was of green copper.
- c. Dormers: None. Skylights in roof.

C. Description of Interior:

1. Floor plans:

- a. Basement: Area under the hall was divided into rooms. The floor and dividing walls were brick. In the south section the ceiling beams were partially visible. The beams, 6 inches wide, ran east-west, 12 feet apart, and were supported by three iron posts each. The basement of the dwelling was finished with brick walls and some wood partitions.
- b. First floor: The main room of the hall appeared originally to have been the full width of the building, but a row

of offices later occupied the east 13 feet. The ceiling showed a division running northwest and separating the area into three sections, each approximately 13 feet wide, with the beams supported at the end walls by brackets. This may have been changed when the rusticated doorway was removed. There were two small rooms north of the main room which connected with the hallway. The hallway contained stairs and the entrance to the loggia. North of the hallway were two additional rooms. The one room ell and the loggia connected the hall with the dwelling to the east. The dwelling had two rooms on the first floor with a stair hall and a reception room which was originally an entrance porch.

- c. Second floor: Hall had large rooms which were being redivided before demolition.
 - d. Third floor: Hall had a central hallway running north-south with small rooms on the side with windows and skylights. At the north and south ends there was a single room across the entire end. The ceiling went up into the gable and there was no attic.
- 2. Stairways: In the dwelling the stairs from the first to second floor had twenty-one risers and made a quarter turn. The stairs were simple and undecorated with a square newel approximately 10 inches square with low pyramidal chamfered edges and dowel balusters. In the hall the stairs at the west end of the east-west hallway, which went from the first to second floor, had twenty-seven risers, 7 inches each, and made a half turn with a landing. This stairway was also very simple. The hall stairs from the second to third floor had twenty-three risers and made a half turn. The stairs had the same simple square newel and balusters. The second floor of the dwelling was approximately 3-1/2 feet lower than the hall and the two were connected by a short run of six risers.
 - 3. Flooring: Wood. The second floor of the dwelling, which was undergoing remodeling and repartitioning, had exposed pine floor boards, mostly 5 inches or 7 inches. The third floor of the hall had an east-west cross beam which measured approximately 7 inches x 10 inches, with slats for north-south beams 12 inches on center and 2 inches wide. The floor had 4-1/2 inch pine boards.
 - 4. Wall and ceiling finish: The walls of the dwelling, approximately 12 inches thick, were plastered and had simple picture molding at the ceiling. The ceiling was undecorated. The conservatory in the dwelling, with the bay window, had vertical tongue and groove paneling, 1-5/8 inches wide, on the north wall. The main first floor room in the hall had a

simple 4-foot wainscoting of 3-1/2-inch vertical tongue and groove panels with one bead. The hall ceiling was approximately 15 feet high on the first floor with a simple ceiling molding. The hallways had similar wainscoting. The third floor of the hall had 3-foot wainscoting.

5. Doorways and doors: The doors of the hall had four panels and simple frames. The doors of the dwelling had simple molded frames and were either double doors of two and four panels each or single doors of four panels.
6. Decorative features and trim: The windows had a recessed panel below and the reveals were carried to the floor. There was wainscoting in the labs and hallways. There were brackets with simple details in the hall.
7. Hardware: There were numerous old doorknobs of copper with raised interlace pattern. In the large south room of the hall on the first floor there were two ventilators, approximately 2 or 3 feet in diameter, that were originally in the center of the three bays. A pendent with perforated sides with a knob at the end hung from the molded circular collar. In the northeast room on the first floor of the hall there was a rectangular louvered vent close to the ceiling, also for ventilation. In the cellar under the dwelling there was part of a furnace with a door marked, "Cyrus Carpenter. / & Co / Boston Mass." The third floor had several east-west tie-rods and tie beams.
8. Lighting: There were traces of gas butts in the walls and ceiling.
9. Heating: There were some cast iron hot air grates in the walls, as in the southeast room on the second floor. There was a flue at the north (rear) of the hall, probably for stoves. On the second floor in a small room, approximately 12 feet x 18 feet, on the east side, was a rectangular fireplace of black marble with yellow veining which was very simple and of good proportions. This fireplace was bricked up. There was a similar indication of a fireplace or stove in the ell on the north wall. The opening on the first floor was bricked up and a similar second floor opening, approximately 30 inches square, was also sealed.

D. Site:

1. General setting and orientation: The building faced south towards the Harvard Yard. It was formerly set close to Kirkland Street just west of the junction with Cambridge Street. Both streets were later removed, so Lawrence Hall had more ample walks and plantings surrounding the building.

2. Outbuildings: None.
3. Landscaping, walks, and enclosures: The building had modern landscaping and walks with no enclosures.

Prepared by Daniel Reiff
Survey Associate
Cambridge Historical Commission
February 17, 1968

PART III. PROJECT INFORMATION

These records were prepared as part of a cooperative project between the Cambridge Historical Commission (CHC), Albert B. Wolfe, Chairman, and the Historic American Buildings Survey, National Park Service. The project followed a previous one conducted during the summer of 1964 under the same auspices and was initiated in September 1967 and completed in June 1969. It was under the general direction of Robert Bell Rettig, Associate Survey Director of the CHC, and James C. Massey, Chief, HABS. Miss Susan Maycock, CHC Survey Associate and graduate student in architectural history at Boston University, was responsible for the historical data; the architectural data was written by Daniel D. Reiff, CHC Survey Associate who was at that time a Harvard University doctoral candidate in the Department of Fine Arts; and the photographs were taken by George M. Cushing, Boston. Certain data was supplied by Dr. Bainbridge Bunting, CHC Survey Director and Professor of Art and Architectural History at the University of New Mexico. The records were edited by Denys Peter Myers, Principal Architectural Historian, HABS, and Deborah Stephens, Architectural Historian, HABS.